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SOME RESULTS OF THE WAR.

BY SYDNEY BROOKS.

IN any attempt to estimate the results of the war we must first make sure that the war is really over. Is the peace that was signed at Portsmouth on September 5th a lasting peace or a mere truce? Were the St. Petersburg papers right that affected to speak of it as nothing more than a temporary suspension of hostilities, a momentary step backwards to enable Russia to make a better jump later on? Or was the Mikado right when, as in his telegram of congratulations and thanks to President Roosevelt, he declared the peace to be "based on principles essential to the permanent welfare and tranquillity of the Far East"? Unless and until such questions are resolved, however tentatively, the essential basis for speculation on the consequences of this unique conflict must be lacking. Nor is it altogether easy to resolve them or to strike even an approximate balance of probabilities.

In England, I must say that opinion inclines overwhelmingly to a belief in the durability of the peace. Yet, even in England, there are those who sound a note of reasoned scepticism. They argue that Russia emerges from the Conference "with the prestige of her traditional powers of resistance not only confirmed but immensely enhanced"; that she will be more than ever convinced of her security from last humiliations and injuries "entailed by war upon Powers whose national organization can be shattered by a blow at the centre"; that, in short, she has not learned her lesson; that, though she has agreed to peace, it is with a mind full of *arrière-pensées*, and that there is "no inward renunciation, no real chastening, of her traditional ambition in the Far East." No political thinker, they assert, can believe that Russia proposes to be definitely content with the territorial limits into which she has been compressed. We are

warned that the Siberian railway will be relaid and double-tracked from Moscow to Harbin, and that in any future war in the Far East Russian striking-power will be vastly increased. We are invited to remember that the motives which, at some future time, might impel Russia to a renewal of the struggle can only be justly appraised if we take into account both the magnitude of the prize for which she offered battle and all that the loss of it, if final and irreversible, means to her.

What does that loss amount to? It amounts to this: that Russia, after generations, centuries even, of peaceable, almost effortless, expansion across Northern Asia, and at the very moment when that process of expansion was about to receive its coping-stone, is now condemned to admit defeat at the hands of a despised Asiatic nation; to acknowledge herself no longer a part-proprietor in the fortunes of the Pacific Ocean, but only a visitor on sufferance; to see the vast and resplendent undertaking of the Siberian railway end fatuously in a *cul-de-sac*, and to feel that the domination of China has been wrenched from her. Port Arthur was far more than the symbol of Russian power in the Far East. It marked the triumph of that ambition which, since the days of Peter the Great, has animated all Russian policy. At Port Arthur alone had Russia established herself by the side of the warm waters; and the loss of it tragically duplicates for Russia in the Far East the very dangers that threaten her on the Persian Gulf, the Bosphorus and the Baltic. She remains a virtually landlocked State. The bonds that but two years ago seemed at last to have been severed, have been riveted on anew. The only base from which Russia could defend and promote her interests and ambitions throughout China and the Pacific has been snatched from her and occupied by her conqueror and rival.

Is it to be supposed that Russia will forever resign herself to the ignominy, the cramping limitations, of such a fate? Her future effectiveness in the Far East, her influence over China, and almost her very existence as a naval Power in the Pacific depend upon its reversal. To her time is nothing; the lure that for centuries has drawn her towards the Far East is much.

There is, admittedly, a certain force in such arguments as these. But I think it can be shown that there is a greater force in the facts which they overlook. More than a little weight, for instance, should be attached to the unanimity with which the world

has recognized the reasonableness of the peace. It is a peace that frustrates great ambitions and brings to partial or total ruin many great schemes of policy and material enterprise; but it does so without straining the logic of accomplished facts, and without pushing either the rights or the opportunities of the victor to the uttermost point. It is a peace such as Bismarck made with Austria after expelling her from the Germanic confederation—a peace, that is, framed to save the self-respect of the vanquished nation, to reconcile her to the inevitable, and to prepare the way for a restitution of cordiality and confidence. Not only is this the opinion of the world, but also of Russia herself. Russia admitted, in a very practical way, the essential justice of all the vital Japanese demands by agreeing to them almost without discussion or objection. She readily recognized Japan's predominant interests in Corea, handed over to her the lease of Port Arthur, and undertook to evacuate Manchuria. So vast a surrender—involving the giving up of almost everything Russia has striven for in the Far East—could scarcely have been made so easily had it not been felt that it was not merely unavoidable, but the just and necessary result of the war. To have yielded all this does not seem, as a matter of fact, to have humiliated Russia so much as her successful refusal to pay an indemnity seems to have rejoiced her. That is a happy omen. A peace is all the more likely to be enduring when the vanquished belligerent is obliged to confess that it might have been worse. The absence throughout Russia of any resentment against Japan, the consolation of having on one or two minor points achieved diplomatic successes and forced Japan to give way, and the essentially generous and responsive characters of both peoples, are all in their way guarantees of the stability of the peace.

But a far more effective guarantee is to be found in the internal state of Russia. The extent to which the domestic ferment hampered the prosecution of the war and induced peace has, I believe, been greatly exaggerated. At the same time, the war has made it forever impossible to separate the external fortunes of Russia from her internal conditions; and for the latter the first and decisive necessity is a long period of recuperation. We must remember that what the reformers at bottom contend is that domestic development, from now onwards, must precede foreign exploitation. To a policy of aggression and expansion

they oppose a policy of consolidation. Russia to be strong abroad must first be contented and, if possible, prosperous at home. But consolidation, as the reformers use the word, can only mean a contraction of Russia's foreign activities, Russian finances being totally unable to pursue simultaneously external expansion and internal improvement. I have elsewhere argued that, so far as Russia is concerned, an unbreakable chain of cause and effect links constitutional reform with economic reform, and both with foreign policy. The first will be futile without the second, and the second impossible while the third remains unchanged. Every sign and every probability point to the conclusion that, for many years to come, Russia's main preoccupation must be of a domestic character; and it seems almost certain that a struggle has been begun which will not be abandoned until Russians are in possession of the elementary liberties of worshipping, speaking, writing, meeting and moving as they please; until they are allowed a real share in the direction of national policy; and until they cease to be the victims of a system that prefers an empty colonial expansion to the well-being of the people at home. Even with these elementary liberties secured, the tangible promotion of national well-being will not have been brought much nearer. The national well-being of Russia cannot be promoted unless taxation is reduced, or unless the product of taxation is diverted from strategical and imperial to social and domestic purposes; and neither course is possible without a sweeping change in the scope of Russian expansion and foreign policy. Until conditions at home have become more stable, until the intellectuals have been pacified, until the peasant is relieved from the necessity of selling for money what he needs for food, Russia, one may confidently predict, will be forced to confine herself to domestic affairs.

That a regenerated Russia, ruled, or partially ruled, by popular opinion, would ultimately prove less aggressive or less Imperialistic than the bureaucratic Russia of to-day, there is no reason to believe. Sooner or later, we may be sure, Russian expansion will resume its course. Whither will that course lie? To such a question there can but be the broad answer which is supplied by all Russian history—it will lie along the line of least resistance. But there can be very little difficulty in proving that Manchuria and the Far East are the line, not of least but of greatest resistance, and that even towards Constantinople, even

towards the Indian frontier, Russia would not encounter obstacles one-half as forbidding as those that time must infallibly array against her in the Far East. If we imagine a renewal of the recent struggle twenty, thirty or forty years hence, we may be dealing in speculation with a time to which the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in its new and more vigorous form does not apply. I say we may be, because even that is not a certainty. The community of political interests that unites Great Britain and Japan is so strong that, even fifty years hence, the two Powers may be guaranteeing by the naval and military might of both the Asiatic possessions of each. What, at any rate, may be regarded as axiomatic is that, while that Alliance endures and binds both the high contracting Powers to come to one another's assistance when either is attacked in Asia by even a single enemy, Russia, so far as the Far East is concerned, is pegged down to peace.

But, leaving the Alliance altogether on one side, and counting up Russia's chances of success in any future war with Japan as though Great Britain did not exist, it must be very clear that the conditions of a Russo-Japanese struggle can never again be as favorable to Russia as they have been during the past two years. For in the future Japan will be able to hurl against her foe the endless armies of China. The Occident is still curiously sceptical of the Chinese ability to fight, just as it used to be sceptical of the ability of any Oriental people to handle so complicated a machine as a battle-ship, or to learn more than the alphabet of applied science. But that the Chinese can fight was sufficiently proved during the Taiping rebellion; that they are willing to receive from Japan the training, and are able to receive from her the vital touch, that differentiate an army from a mob, seems established by all that is known of the discipline, equipment and morale of General Ma's army; and that Peking will seek to flood Manchuria with colonists, and will henceforward zealously guard the province that contains the ancestral tombs of the Imperial House of China may also be taken for granted. It is a reasonable assumption that, before restoring Manchuria to China, Japan will take every precaution to insure the safety of its frontiers; will organize, discipline and reinvigorate the Chinese forces; and will in time convert them into a formidable instrument of defence, capable, in case of need, of harassing to an indefinite extent the Russian communications and system of supplies. A

double instead of a single line from Moscow to Harbin would not, therefore, greatly benefit the Russians if it merely brought them into the midst of tens of thousands of Chinese through whom a way would have to be cut. And even then Russia's difficulties would have no more than begun. To reach Port Arthur—and Port Arthur alone would be her objective—she would have to fight and march, march and fight, from Harbin to the sea. She would have no railways; they would all be in Chinese or Japanese hands. Being forever deprived of an effective naval base in the Far East—for half-frozen Vladivostok is not an effective base—she could neither challenge the Japanese navy, except in the feckless Rojestvensky fashion, nor interrupt for a moment the troops and supplies that would be poured on to the mainland. Behind her would be the Chinese myriads; before her would be the Japanese armies; and to the remnants who escaped or broke through both the Chinese and Japanese would fall the task of besieging and capturing Port Arthur. All and more than all that the Japanese have accomplished in the last nineteen months the Russians would have to accomplish under circumstances of infinitely greater difficulty. The thing, in short, is so impossible that it is doubtful whether it would ever be attempted and certain that it would never succeed.

The peace, then, will endure. On the edge of Asia, and in a position to dominate that ocean which more and more is becoming the battle-ground of the world's politics, a new Power is irreversibly established. Of that Power, as I have before now ventured to suggest in some English journals, very little is really known. Her rise has been too swift, too secret and too dazzling to enable the world to gauge her aspirations and ultimate ambitions. We know, indeed, that in all or most of the elements of strength she is as strong as any Power in the world. The revealing light of war has given us the partial measure of her capacities and some glimpses of her hidden character. She has placed a million soldiers on the mainland of Asia, and every one of those soldiers seems to be a Bayard. Their cheerful and passionate contempt for death, their capacity to sustain every extreme of climate and every kind of fatigue, added to their intelligence and their bravery, make the experts doubt whether as units the Japanese soldiers have, or ever have had, any superiors. We have seen, too, that Japan can display an administrative efficiency which is not

only unique in Asiatic history, but, except perhaps in Germany, unrivalled anywhere. We know also that her officers are capable of adding to a groundwork of administrative perfection the flexibility and the intellectual qualities of the highest generalship. And what applies to the army applies even more pertinently to the navy. On both elements Japan stands forth so powerfully equipped and so protected by her geographical position as to be virtually invulnerable except by China, whom she will control, and by Russia, who will not again venture to attack her. In a few years' time she will have a fleet thrice as big as Togo's, an army improved, if that be possible, by the experience of the past two years, and a material basis and reserve in Corea and Manchuria infinitely greater than any she now possesses.

And to say even this much is still to leave unmentioned the prime and imperishable sources of her strength. It has been borne in upon Europe and America by the experiences of the war that there is to-day no Western nation with a fibre so hardy, with the spirit of unity so intensive and so extensive, with the capacity for self-surrender at once so disciplined and so instinctive, and with the sense of obligation so universal and positive, as Japan's. To a degree that the Occident not only cannot approach but finds it hard even to realize, Japan is a State animated by the passion of private sacrifice for public ends. Europe and America in fact have to acknowledge, and to rearrange their diplomacy by the acknowledgment, that Japan is a Power of the very first class, secretive, incognizable, perspicacious, resolute, indomitable, equipped with every quality and every resource that can make a nation victorious and keep her great. They have also to face and acknowledge this unquestionable and staggering fact that Asia has found a leader, and that something like a thrill of recognition and understanding has passed from Cape Comorin to Peking. I read a few months ago the translation of a letter written to a well-known Persian newspaper by a Persian patriot. In it the writer suggested to his countrymen the advantages of a commercial alliance between Japan and Persia; of making their military purchases in Japan; of sending Persian students to Japan for military, naval and other kinds of education; and of requisitioning the services of Japanese officers for the training of Persian troops in the arts of modern warfare. In India, the effect of the rise of Japan has been not only to increase the num-

ber of Indian students who repair to Tokyo for instruction, but to suggest a parallel that the English rulers of the country cannot view without some disquietude. Indian opinion has, I believe, warmly approved the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as an example of English liberality and of English preference for the realities over the shams of civilization; but, undoubtedly, the Japanese successes have very widely sown the idea that, if they too were "free," Indians might do as the Japanese have done. But it is, of course, in China that the results of the victory of Japan will be deepest and most numerous. Already there are signs of a new and incalculable spirit—witness the boldness of the boycott of American goods, the cancellation of the Canton-Hankow Railway contract, the insistence with which China pressed her claim to be represented at the Portsmouth Conference, the edict adumbrating a Parliament twelve years hence, the beginnings of military reorganization, and the swiftly growing number of Chinese students who are now scattering over Japan, America and Europe. The "yellow peril," as the Kaiser figures it, must always remain a mere nightmare; but that Japan will seek to rouse and harness the vast potential energy of China, to organize her resources and to shape her policy, seems not only natural but necessary. And the resurrection of China, if it be real and thorough—as it certainly will be, if the Japanese have anything to do with it—may mean that the next Boxer rising will prove successful, and must mean that the methods and spirit of Western dealings with Peking must be revolutionized.

Nothing can be more foolish than to suppose that Japan will not have ambitions, a policy and a dignity of her own. Her dignity will make it impossible for her to remain eternally quiescent under the exclusion laws that are enforced against her subjects in Australia, British Columbia, Hawaii and the United States. She might not think it worth a war, if remonstrances and appeals failed to get the offending statutes altered or repealed; but she might very well come to the conclusion that this is one of the matters in which reciprocity should prevail. She might, therefore, as China has begun to do, penalize the trade or the subjects, or both, of the countries that discriminated against Japanese immigrants; and if once Japan's voice were raised in a demand that Asiatics, Americans and Europeans should be treated, and should treat one another, alike, it would be impossible to disre-

gard it. That her ambitions are likely to take a form that would cause anxiety to Germany as the owner of Kiao-chow, to France as the owner of Indo-China, or to the United States as the owner of the Philippines, I cannot bring myself to believe. For many years to come, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance will be a specific guarantee for the stability of the *status quo* in and around Asia; and for yet more distant years Japan will still be developing that huge and fruitful Empire that has come to her as the spoils of war, will still be consolidating her interests in China, and will still be straining to undersell all competitors and to secure the virtual monopoly of the Chinese trade. That may not be a prospect that is particularly pleasing either to Europe or to America; but, at least, it relegates into the remote background the prospects of a policy of aggression. For our day and generation, at the very least, and probably for much longer, Japan's energies will be too much engrossed with the duties and opportunities that lie immediately ahead of her to trouble herself about the further acquisitions that might accrue from a programme of adventure. Nor is there anything in the Japanese character, so far as it has been revealed to us, that at all squares with the aggressive intentions imputed to her. On the contrary, nothing would seem more alien to that character than those intentions. Japan fought for security and for room. She has won both. She will entrench her security so that it can never again be jeopardized, and she will develop her new dominions to the uttermost. In doing so, she may run grave moral risks. The time may come when she may look back upon to-day as the brightest moment of her history. The materialism of prosperity and success, and the class contentiousness that it swiftly develops, are the foes from whom she has most to fear. They may relax the national fibre, make inroads on that sense of national cohesion now so proudly vivid, and place a set of lower ideals in competition with the spirit of pristine patriotism. This is Japan's Elizabethan epoch. We shall not know till she has been tested by generations of success whether the self-indulgence, the vulgarity, and the party spirit of the Victorian Age, are also to be hers. The lines of her development from now onwards are complex and obscure; but those who predict that she will prove a sort of Genghis Khan among nations have surely the flimsiest premises of all to stand on.

SYDNEY BROOKS.